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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 KYIV 004229

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [MARR](#) [RS](#) [AZ](#) [GG](#) [MD](#) [UP](#)
SUBJECT: UKRAINE: GO SLOW APPROACH POSSIBLY COMPLICATING
GUAM'S FUTURE

REF: A. KYIV 4062

[1](#)B. KIEV 3490

Classified By: Political Counselor Kent Logsdon for reasons 1.4(b,d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Ukraine is increasingly willing to use the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development - GUAM as a policy coordination vehicle, covering everything from joint declarations by GUAM members on regional issues to economic, military and scientific cooperation. However, Ukraine, as the host for GUAM's new secretariat is also fumbling with the operational steps necessary to make the regional organization an operating concern, delaying approval of the GUAM Charter due to domestic political considerations -- a step that could result in delaying the scheduled opening of the GUAM Secretariat in January 2007. Uncertainty about the attitude

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of the new government toward GUAM, especially in light of open hostility from the Communists (a member of the ruling coalition), means that Ukraine will probably be cautious over the next few months as it moves to operationalize the organization. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) Comment. Over the past two years, the Ukrainian government (GOU) appeared to understand better than other GUAM members the need to establish a Secretariat in order to be seen as a credible regional organization, especially by the EU. The GOU had also recognized that the lack of a permanent headquarters impeded both the operational and financial effectiveness of the U.S.-GUAM Framework Program. As a result, Ukraine became the primary force behind establishing a Secretariat by providing the building, initial funding, and carrying the pen on drafting the required protocols. However, recent reluctance to push ahead with approval of the GUAM Charter and concerns about raising GUAM's profile with the new government means that we may have to nudge the Ukrainians to stay on track if they want to realize the goal declared in the 2005 GUAM Chisinau Declaration - to be an organization that stands for EU integration, democracy and free markets. End Comment.

Multilateral Coordination

[1](#)3. (SBU) Over the past two years, Ukraine has used GUAM more actively as a policy coordination vehicle and an organizing principle for cooperation with its fellow members. In October, apparently to sidestep the issue of whether or not to make a statement, the Ukrainian government prompted the adoption of a joint GUAM statement on Russia-Georgia tensions (ref A). However, according to GUAM Information Office Executive Director Yevgen Koziy, the Ukrainian MFA had also issued its own criticism of Russian actions in Georgia (note: in fact, the latest statement we found concerning the relations between Russia and Georgia on the MFA website was

dated August 2). The Ukrainian Government has been instrumental in the effort to create a GUAM development bank (ref B).

¶4. (C) Ukraine has also tried to use GUAM to help settle "frozen conflicts." Andriy Beshta, of the MFA's UN directorate, told us October 24 that GUAM countries were close to finalizing an UNGA resolution on frozen conflicts. According to Beshta, the resolution's text is being drafted to be consistent with the suggestions EUR DAS Kramer made to GUAM ministers at the U.S.-GUAM bilateral on the margins of UNGA and in a manner as non-controversial as possible in hopes of garnering U.S. support. Beshta told us "off the record" that he is concerned about the current tension between Georgia and Russia and fears Ukraine could face the same type of pressure. (We subsequently forwarded the draft text of the UNGA resolution, received October 27, to the Department.)

¶5. (SBU) There has also been Ukrainian support for closer ties between the Science and Technology Center (STCU) and GUAM. SCTU Executive Director Andrew Hood proposed development of a cooperative relationship between STCU and GUAM. Hood noted that GUAM's membership closely matches STCU's (Uzbekistan is also a member of STCU) and shared similar goals in the spheres of science cooperation, high technology development, and socio-economic and regional security enhancement. STCU could be helpful in implementing the science and technology aspects of the GUAM Charter. The MFA is eager to discuss the concept. (Comment. The multilaterally-funded, including by USG, STCU is casting about for new programs and roles now that its primary mission of finding employment for scientists and engineers formerly working on WMD programs is declining. Arranging this cooperation, however, would be facilitated once GUAM establishes a Secretariat. End Comment.)

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PKO and Military Cooperation

¶6. (SBU) Koziy told us that GUAM members have been discussing the notion of giving GUAM a peacekeeping capability, but stressed that any peacekeeping operations would only take place under a UN or OSCE mandate. In his view, it took five years to develop the framework for a joint Ukrainian-Polish battalion to participate in the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR), so it was likely that a similar period would likely be needed to establish any GUAM peacekeeping force.

¶7. (U) In fact, the Ukrainian Defense Ministry touted the crisis response "Rough and Ready 06" exercise with the California Air National Guard as an example of military cooperation among GUAM members, reinforcing perceptions that GUAM members were working toward a joint peacekeeping capability. The civil-military search and rescue exercise, held in Odesa September 17-20, had 12 participants each from Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Moldova; 180 from Ukraine; and over 60 from the U.S.

Status of the Secretariat

¶8. (U) Ukraine's strong support for GUAM has translated into its strong support for the establishment of a permanent secretariat. According to Koziy, renovation of the 1,000

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square meter premises in downtown Kyiv that will house the GUAM Secretariat should be finished in early 2007. Completion of the premises had received an additional push because of President Yushchenko's personal interest in the project. Even if the building is not completed on schedule, Koziy suggested that the GUAM Secretariat staff could operate temporarily in the existing GUAM Information Office premises

in the Shevchenko University International Relations Institute. He said there would be a meeting of National Coordinators on November 27 or 28 in Tblisi and a Ministerial meeting on December 4 or 5 in Brussels to approve the final documents required to establish the Secretariat formally.

¶9. (SBU) When asked if the Ministry of Interior (MoI) would assume responsibility for the Virtual Law Enforcement Center (VLEC) from the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) -- an arrangement that would be more in keeping with EU law enforcement norms -- Koziy replied that, while MFA was in favor of MoI control, the current arrangement could not be changed because of legal restrictions. Robert Peacock, coordinator for the Euro-Atlantic Advisory Team in Kyiv, noted the location of Ukraine's VLEC in the SBU headquarters building has a tendency to inhibit its use by other agencies.

Operational Snafus and Political Complications

¶10. (C) Ukraine, however, is fumbling with the operational steps necessary to make the regional organization an operating reality. Concern about raising GUAM's profile has led the Government to delay seeking Rada approval of the documents needed to make GUAM a functioning entity. And with Rada consideration of the GUAM Charter delayed due to domestic political considerations, the GUAM Secretariat is unlikely to open in January 2007 as planned. (Embassy note: The Communist Party is already a vocal opponent of GUAM. And since a vote on the GUAM charter has the potential to split the ruling coalition, something that has not yet happened in the Rada, the MFA is delaying consideration of the bill until other controversial issues are voted upon.)

¶11. (C) In an October 27 meeting with Ambassador and PolCouns, Ukrainian DFM Andriy Veselovskiy said the GUAM Charter had not been put to a vote in the parliament (Rada) because parties in the ruling coalition, namely the Communists and the Socialists, who were opposed to Ukraine's entry into NATO could view a strengthened GUAM as a NATO "Trojan horse." The MFA said that the coalition's leading Party of Regions might choose to vote against the GUAM charter rather than split the ruling coalition. Thus, Veselovskiy preferred to delay the vote until another issue was considered, i.e. WTO-related legislation, that was contentious for the ruling coalition with the hope that a vote on GUAM would not become a test-case for the coalition's unity.

¶12. (C) During an October 30 meeting, Georgian Embassy Senior Counselor Levan Nizharadze told us that he was worried about the prospects of getting the GUAM Charter approved by the Rada in time for the Secretariat to open as planned. He said that the Party of Regions government may be tempted to slow GUAM progress in an effort to gain leverage with the

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Russians, and feels that the Ukrainians will need a "nudge" from the U.S. to keep GUAM on track. Nizharadze does not think that the Secretariat can function without an approved charter since the organization would be unable to approve a budget.

¶13. (U) Visit Embassy Kyiv's classified website:
www.state.gov/p/eur/kyiv.
Taylor